

# The Book Market

by Ernst Fischer

The medium of the book, as a portable store of knowledge, has always made a central contribution to the rise of cultural areas. Dependent by its nature on language, the book market rendered pan-European communication possible over the centuries during which Latin was the lingua franca of scholars, with the formation of various regional centres. Since as long ago as the Reformation, however, the character of the book markets has been increasingly marked by the national languages. The resulting barriers were overcome primarily by translation. Within the world-wide transfer of knowledge and culture, the business of translation gained considerable importance in the 19th and 20th centuries. Since the end of the Second World War, the international links of the book markets have once again become closer knitted – through literary agencies, the formation of multinational corporations and the licence agreements transacted at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

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## Introduction

Markets are sites of communication. They create economic exchange relations and in doing so establish connections between people and separated places and, as a side-effect, initiate fruitful cultural contacts. This especially applies to the book market, since its commodities transport knowledge and values. This gives it a specific function in encouraging and integrating culture. At the same time, one must be aware that so broad a concept remains an abstraction, a construct. On the one hand, the book market is to a great extent tied to language areas (→ Media Link #ab). Book markets are "language markets". On the other hand, it is also divided, within a given country, corresponding to the variety of products and target groups, into submarkets (e.g. the "school book market") or individual market segments. It is evident that the historical manifestations of what we call the book market also differ considerably from one another.

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With regard to the book as a medium in distinction to other media (→ Media Link #ac), reference to the book market is, however, more than a "publicist metaphor", especially viewed against a transnational European background. It is not possible to review the history of all the national book markets simultaneously, or to form a sum of these. However, it does seem meaningful to enquire whether and when the development of transnational market structures took place, what kinds of interaction, cooperation and formation of centres there were, what forms of cultural transfer are brought about by the book markets, and in particular to explore the part the German book market played in these contexts.

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Finally, one should also examine the relation between the book market and history in a profounder sense. It is indisputably the case that recurring changes in the modes of communication within a society carry the historical process forward. Thus book markets, as an important element of these communication relations, and at the same time as the ma-

terial substratum of the interchange of ideas, have a specific role in historical change. From this results the question as to the contribution to the development of an integral European culture not only of the book as such, but also its markets, in the past, and the contribution which they may make in the future, within a politically united Europe. Significantly, the European Union came into being as a common market in the 1950s. Meanwhile it endeavours – while recognising regional identities – to develop a cultural dimension beyond the economic dimension for the community of states. In doing so, it takes up again an idea of Europe (→ Media Link #ad) that goes back to antiquity. Accordingly, a European history of the book market has to pick up the thread "where it all began".

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## Preliminary and early stages in Antiquity

The development of advanced civilisations has always been connected with the use of writing. Writing and reading materials of various kinds rendered possible the propagation and storing of knowledge across distances in time and space. The manuscript, particularly in the form of the papyrus scroll, and from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards also the parchment codex, was in the Near East and in Europe for many centuries the medium that made a decisive contribution to the development of occidental civilisation. Each manuscript of that age is unique. This is also true to a certain extent of copies. Copying, or having private copies made by slaves, was common practice in antiquity in order to acquire a written text or work. The possession of books seems not to have been unusual for the Attic citizen of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. There were also libraries, some of them considerable, in the philosophical academies. In ancient Greece manuscripts were traded in, also in the sense of "antiquarian" books. They were offered for sale by itinerant salesmen or at markets; there are also scattered reports of bookshops.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, manuscripts were distributed in the course of conquests or by deliberate collecting, for instance through the endeavours of the librarians of Alexandria to put themselves in possession of as many manuscripts as possible. The whole world of the book underwent an upsurge in the Hellenistic period.

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In ancient Rome, more highly developed forms of trading in books came about, to provide for both private and public libraries. Occasionally, the simultaneous duplication of originals was achieved by dictation. At the same time, the private copy retained its supreme importance. The modern publishing function of duplication and stock-keeping was corresponded to by the sale of manuscripts in bookshops; the bookseller (*librarius* or *bibliopola*) announced his range of products by advertisements at the portal. As well as this form of bookselling *in situ*, the rise of long-distance book trading can also be observed. During the imperial period, there already was a widespread network of booksellers, so that, for instance, Horace (65–8 BC) (→ Media Link #ae) was able to count on the distribution of his books in Spain, in Africa or in Lyon.<sup>2</sup>

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This system of long-distance trading in books disappeared with the fall of the *Imperium Romanum* – so that for almost a millennium it was not possible to use the services of a commercially run book trade!<sup>3</sup>

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## Book culture and trading in manuscripts in the European Middle Ages

From the foundation of the monastery of Vivarium by Cassiodorus (c. 485–c. 580) (→ Media Link #af) in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, however, the splendid book culture of occidental monasteries developed. The illuminated manuscripts manufactured in the scriptoria from Ireland to the Lake of Constance and from Byzantium to Burgundy are among the most magnificent cultural monuments in Europe, even if, alternating with periods of flourishing, there were times of flagging zeal for writing, with the decay of libraries and of the monasterial cultivation of learning. At no time, however, did there exist a "market" for these books. Books were donated, but above all the monastic orders (→ Media Link #ag) used to borrow books from other monasteries in order to copy them. Only in exceptional cases were books bought or sold. The fact that this book culture had a European dimension was due not only to the international structure of the church and monastic orders such as the Benedictines, but also, for instance, the far-reaching effect of Carolingian reforms. At all periods of the Middle Ages, the stylistic features of illuminated books show that there was an epochal and supra-regionally effective transfer of forms and configurations of books. Not least, the monastic book production made a decisive contribution to preventing a break in the tradition of the European-Occidental thought of pre-Christian Antiquity.

A new situation arose with the foundation of the universities from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards. In Bologna, Padua and Paris, then in Prague, Vienna and numerous other cities, centres of learning were established, and with them new centres of book production. Decrees regulated the provision of literature for professors, other teachers and students. They entrusted the (correct!) copying and the lending of written texts to sworn officials of the university ("university associates"), the *stationarii*. In Western Europe, at any rate in Paris, the *librarii* were permitted to carry on a restricted trade of manuscripts.<sup>4</sup> Selling to other universities, however, was prohibited, so that this kind of trading in books was only of local significance.

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The restoration of book trade structures was further favoured by cathedral and monastery schools, as well as the chancelleries of rulers. From these, a small class formed outside the church, the *litterati* or those able to read and write (→ Media Link #ai), together with those who knew Latin. From the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century on a new writing material, paper, which was up to twenty times cheaper than parchment, spread across central Europe. The invention of the reading stone, the forerunner of spectacles, resulted in an enormous expansion of the reading public.<sup>5</sup> These factors contributed to the notable increase in manuscript production and the "bourgeoisification" of literature in the later Middle Ages. What was decisive for the development of new book trading structures, however, was the economic upturn of the cities, and the rise of a new lay reading public, consisting of aldermen or merchants, who were meanwhile required to be literate, and also to know Latin.

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As would be expected, the trade in manuscripts underwent a dynamic development in Italy, for instance in Florence in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries; in particular, the bookseller Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421–1498) (→ Media Link #aj) worked to the orders of the Medici. He had up to 25 paid scribes at a time working for him, and was still plying his trade most actively after the printing press had been invented. He prepared 200 splendid manuscripts for Duke Cosimo de Medici (1389–1464) (→ Media Link #ak) within 22 months. He also supplied the king of Hungary, Matthias Corvinus (1443–1490) (→ Media Link #al), one of the most dedicated book collectors of the time, with numerous lavishly bound manuscripts.

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In the German-speaking countries, the trade in manuscripts was not thus developed. However, older research literature repeatedly refers to the "modern" scribes' workshop of Diebold Lauber (before 1427–after 1471) (→ Media Link #am) at Hagenau in Alsace. Between 1425 and 1467, Lauber worked to order for bishops, ruling houses and other high-ranking customers. He is also said to have compiled a stock of popular literature – such as heroic or chivalric poetry, rhyming bibles, fortune-telling books, or books on medicines. He obtained his customers through advertisements in books or at book markets held on special occasions, for instance at the Councils of Constance (1414–1418) and Basle (1431–1449). Recent research has relativised this picture.<sup>6</sup> But at that time there must also have been in Germany travelling vendors who – since the invention of the woodcut became known, from 1380 on – sold xylographic block books (*Biblia Pauperum*, *Ars moriendi*) as well as playing-cards and devotional pictures to a semi-literate public. Thus, immediately preceding the invention of book printing, commercial forms of book distribution had again come into being.

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## The invention of the printing press and its effect on the European book market

With the invention of printing with movable letters around the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century, the situation underwent another decisive change, as printing an edition of several hundred or even several thousand copies created a quantity of books which (except for broadsheets, fliers, etc.) could no longer be sold at the place of printing itself. This made manifest the problem of sales organisation. The first printed books were sold and traded in at the fairs and markets of the big trading cities. Correspondingly, the art of printing spread along the main European long-distance trade routes<sup>7</sup> (Strasbourg 1461, Cologne 1466, Rome 1467, Basle 1468, Augsburg 1468, Venice 1469, and so on). By 1500, there were 73 printing centres. During the period 1480 to 1520, Venice may be regarded as the centre of the cultivation of printing and of book culture. Within a few decades, a network of production sites arose from Valencia to Cracow, and from Lyon to Lisbon. Here, in the framework of intensive trade relations, the first beginnings of a pan-European book market struc-

ture developed. This to begin with offered a platform for the debates carried on in the name of humanism.<sup>8</sup>

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In the early times of printing, the forms of circulation underwent rapid changes.<sup>9</sup> At first – as in the manuscript trade – the whole business activity, both production and sales, was in the hands of the printer-publisher. As production increased, however, he had less and less time to undertake the extensive journeys necessary for his turnover, and therefore had to avail himself of the services of third parties. One possibility was to found dependencies abroad. Johannes Fust (c. 1400–1466) (→ Media Link #ap) and Peter Schöffer (c. 1475–1547) (→ Media Link #aq) from Mainz, the latter of whom was the former financier and assistant of Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1400–1468) (→ Media Link #ar), set up a branch in Paris, followed by Schöffer in Angers. Anton Koberger (c. 1440–1513) (→ Media Link #as) from Nuremberg also set up branches in Paris, Lyon and Basle, among other places. For this purpose, a "factor" was employed who took care of sales. This international sales procedure was possible because a large part of the production appeared in Latin, the lingua franca of learning at the time. Another method was to employ "Buchführer" who were responsible for the regional sales of the prints. These were, to begin with, itinerant employed booksellers. They attended in particular the larger markets with fairs – at Strasbourg, Nördlingen, Frankfurt or Leipzig, but also Naumburg or Augsburg. They deposited their casks or bales of books in inns, and advertised their wares by notices displayed at inns or churches. They also already handed out printed lists containing up to 200 titles. In this manner, stocks of books were created which then became centre points of the sales/distribution system. In these travelling stores can be seen the beginnings of a book trade with fixed premises.

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The next step was also of significance for the differentiation of the market structures. The first and second generations of printer-publishers only distributed their own production, which frequently did not satisfy the wishes of the public. Following the recommendations of the "Buchführer", they included the production of other publishers in their range of goods. Another possibility was for a factor to set up a business of his own and put together an attractive range of the most sought-after titles of various printers. This was the birth of the bookseller in the classical sense.

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During the same period, still in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the functions of printing and publishing were separated. The printer restricted himself to accepting commissions to print, that is, he became a salaried printer. The pre-financing of the editions, advancing the printing costs, was done by the bookseller, who became a publisher-retailer. With the books printed at his behest and at his expense, he now travelled regularly to the book fairs, to make printed sheet for printed sheet exchanges with other publishers. This system of "barter" persisted, with some modifications, for about 200 years, up to the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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Frankfurt had meanwhile become the centre of the literary market within the Holy Roman Empire and beyond.<sup>10</sup> Peter Schöffer, who had continued to run Gutenberg's workshop, had already taken his wares to Frankfurt, and was thus presumably the first printer-publisher to attend the fair there. Others followed, e.g. Anton Koberger from Nuremberg, who had expanded his workshop into a large firm, and had a special vault built in Frankfurt for the storage of his books; or the publishers Johannes Amerbach (1444–1513) (→ Media Link #au), Johann Froben (c. 1460–1527) (→ Media Link #av), or Johannes Petri (1441–1511) (→ Media Link #aw), all from Basle. The flourishing of humanism brought to Frankfurt publishers not only from Switzerland, but also from Paris, Venice, Verona, Rome, Antwerp and many other centres of learning and of early book printing. From the turn of the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Frankfurt fair, with its half-yearly rhythm, developed into a permanent institution for the booksellers' trade. Until the beginning of the Thirty Years' War, it remained the centre of the European book market, especially for literature in Latin. Among the most faithful visitors, still during the 17<sup>th</sup> and the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, were the Dutch booksellers. The business archive of the printing and publishing enterprise founded in 1555 by Christoph Plantin (c. 1520–1589) (→ Media Link #ax), which was the major one of the time, contains a "Livre de Francfort" listing all the transactions made in Frankfurt. This archive provides exemplary information on the significance of the relations of European booksellers of the time, and was included in 2001 in the World Document Heritage of UNESCO.

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From an early date, individual booksellers had lists of their stock or, after buying at the fair, lists of new acquisitions

printed for their customers. The first was the Augsburg bookseller Georg Willer (1514-1593) (→ Media Link #ay) in 1564. In 1592, a comprehensive fair catalogue appeared as a summary of the booksellers' catalogues published since 1564 (with almost 2,000 French titles!). From 1598 on, there was an official fair catalogue, which was published up to the Easter fair of 1750. There was even an English edition of this between 1617 and 1628. As providing sustained information on the market, fair and stock catalogues were an important precondition for the functioning of the book market, especially as books at that time had a much longer product life-cycle; many titles remained in stock for decades.

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As in the incunabula period of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, in the 16<sup>th</sup> there were also still scattered examples of printing and publishing houses geared to a Europe-wide action radius. This included, for instance, the "Grosse Kompagnie", a "joint venture" of publishers from Cologne and Mainz, who aimed at a widespread distribution of Catholic literature. This developed close business connections above all to Italy but also, for example, supplied the Spanish-Netherlandish and Polish markets, and England up to c. 1570.<sup>11</sup> Much as the Reformation and Counter-Reformation had promoted the development of printed media, especially writings in the vernaculars and mass communication as a whole,<sup>12</sup> their consequences for relations between booksellers within the European continent were ambivalent. With the confessionalisation of the book trade, new connections and structures of cooperation arose, but also demarcation lines, trade barriers and disturbances, which also affected trade at the fairs.

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### Relocation of book trade centres in the 17<sup>th</sup> century

In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, there was rivalry between the book fairs of Frankfurt and Leipzig. In addition, there were still the internationally attended book fairs at Lyon and Paris, as well as others, e.g. in Strasbourg. Lübeck was a transshipment centre for the Nordic countries. Whereas booksellers (and also many scholars) from all parts of Europe came to Frankfurt, Leipzig – with interruptions during the Thirty Years' War – continually gained ground with booksellers from Protestant territories, who felt disadvantaged by the Imperial Book Commission, which acted in Frankfurt as the instrument of the Counter-Reformation. The rivalry between the two book fairs was decided in Leipzig's favour from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century. For Frankfurt, there was the additional negative effect that in the course of the Enlightenment and the modernisation of the sciences, the market for books in Latin shrank, and the Protestant North gained a position of supremacy in intellectual and cultural matters. Since 1750, the Frankfurt book fair had no longer published a catalogue of its own. In 1764, the Leipzig publishers, who dominated the market, gave the signal for the final retreat from the city on the River Main.

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Frankfurt's loss of its position as an international trade centre for scholarly and religious literature had begun with the Thirty Years' War and its catastrophic effects on transport and travel conditions. This decline had continued after 1650, because the practice of barter, which had offered the German book trade so many practical advantages in international business relations (low requirement of capital, avoidance of complicated currency calculations, etc.), now showed itself to be increasingly dysfunctional. Foreign booksellers had little interest in this form of trade, and increasingly shunned the book fairs. Parallel to this, the Netherlands had meanwhile progressed to being the hub of continental European turnover in books, the "bookshop of the world".<sup>13</sup> In the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, the major Dutch booksellers had supplied England with books of hours and breviaries in the Venetian style or, after the death of the first English printer William Caxton (1422–1491) (→ Media Link #b0), with forbidden Protestant books, especially from Antwerp. They remained the most important suppliers of the British Isles with French, Italian and German books. Scholarship in England remained – at least up to the foundation of the Cambridge University Press (1584) and the Oxford University Press (1586), but also later – dependent on the continental European book market. For other European countries, the Dutch printers and booksellers such as Elzeviers (→ Media Link #b1) of Leyden also performed important services in the provision of literature and the linking of national book markets, above all by the reprinting of foreign (English, and later also French) literature in Latin. Furthermore, Amsterdam and other cities gained in importance as freethinking sites of the printing and sales of forbidden literature, among other things by technological transfer in the field of typography.

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### The European book market in the Age of Enlightenment

The century of Enlightenment proved to be a period of change with regard to the conditions of the European book market. Profound changes resulted from the fact that Latin lost its status as the international language of scholarship (though retaining its importance for universities and schools for some time) and was supplanted by the various vernacular languages. In the German-speaking areas the share of books in Latin from 1700 and then again between 1740 and 1800 declined from about 28 percent to barely four percent. Thus the process of the differentiation of the book markets according to national language was continued. The final upturn of the pan-European scientific community, to be observed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, no longer depended on communication in Latin, but was supported by intensive correspondence in the national languages (frequently also in French), together with increasing reading of foreign texts in the original languages or in translation.

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Further factors of change were the rise of a critically thinking bourgeois public, and shifts of cultural emphasis within Europe. In the trend of Enlightenment thought, the standard was set by French, but also English and Scottish, intellectual life. However, obtaining original editions from England or France proved difficult. The stock of foreign booksellers, who hardly wished any longer to engage in barter with their German counterparts, had declined greatly at the book fairs. Therefore, the German booksellers hardly knew how to supply the scholars and universities with foreign books. Only a few of them functioned as importers. In particular, the still close-knit learned networks, also promoted by the academic movement, proved important in the matter of obtaining books. Scholars from London to St. Petersburg informed one another of new publications, and if desired had books sent, or arranged the sending themselves. In this way they replaced or complemented the book trade, which was unable to satisfy the demand that had recently arisen. Journeys were also used to obtain books, or other travellers were entrusted with "book commissions". Private individuals living abroad functioned as book agents.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, there were "interlibrary loans" within the circle of friends and acquaintances.

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Now the translation business also acquired importance, above all set off by the increasing demand for English publications on the continent. From the late 17<sup>th</sup> century on, numerous translations into French, often done by Huguenot refugees, as well as original works and journals in French, were published in the Netherlands and circulated throughout Europe. Literature from France was mostly read in the original. In many other European countries, too, the quantity of translations rose, in the context of the transfer of Enlightenment ideas.

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A milestone in the information system of the book trade was set up by the *Allgemeines Europäisches Bücher-Lexicon*, published by the Leipzig bookseller and publisher Theophilus Georgi (1674–1762) (→ Media Link #b8) in five volumes between 1742 and 1758. This set out to list all books "written and printed in the European part of the world, but especially in Germany" between 1455 and 1739, but chiefly in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This work remained uncompleted, and in particular the claim of international coverage was not met. Volumes one to four were limited to books in German and Latin. The fifth volume listed French writings. The planned compilation of Spanish, Italian, English and Portuguese titles did not take place. Nevertheless, Georgi's listing of approximately 120,000 titles, containing amongst other things the number of sheets and the selling price, represents the last and basically final attempt to give a bibliographical survey of the European book market in its diachronic and synchronic dimensions.

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What was decisive for the future developments, however, was the dynamic development of the book market that commenced in the second half (in Germany in the last third) of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Enlightenment movement had brought with it a boom in the periodical media, newspapers and journals,<sup>15</sup> and given rise to a new class of readers with new reading habits. Now, in place of the scholars, an anonymous bourgeois public, with a high proportion of female readers, formed a market which, through this restructuring, not only grew markedly, but also involved a new choice of books. The change from the intensive repetitive reading of the Bible and devotional literature to the extensive reading of novelties such as romances and popular science publications led, if not to a "reading revolution", at least to an increased demand and an expansion of the market, which the book industry had to cater for with a change in its trade habits and a functional separation of publishers from booksellers offering a wide range of products. Barter yielded first to a cash-trade system and then to "conditional trading", i.e. the delivery of new publications with the right of return. Trade at the Leipzig Fair became a pure accounting business. These profound changes were accompanied by clashes between the bookselling North and South. Here deep-seated conflicts of interests were to some extent carried out with

the means of reprinting. However, by the 19<sup>th</sup> century the bibliopolic splitting of Germany was overcome. With the founding of the *Börsenverein der Deutschen Buchhändler* (German Publishers and Booksellers Association) in 1825, there came about an effective instrument for the reconciliation of interests. The gradual progress of legal regulations concerning copyright and publishing, and the implementation of the "fixed book price" set by the publisher (the "Kröner Reform" of 1886/1887), (→ Media Link #b9) were important conditions for the orderly further development of the German book market.

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## Between nationalism and international exchange: the European book market in the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the rise of nationalistic ideas and tendencies, in which the book trade had its share. Thus publishers and booksellers were to be found in the front line of anti-Napoleonism. Among them was Friedrich Christoph Perthes (1772–1843) (→ Media Link #ba), whose dictum of "der deutsche Buchhandel als Bedingung des Daseins einer deutschen Literatur"<sup>16</sup> encapsulated the idea of the "Kulturnation" ("cultural nation") as a prefiguration of the political nation. This view of the book trade's national cultural mission remained a part of the self-image of German publishers and booksellers into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The rise of the notion of "national literature" (veneration of Schiller) was an expression of these tendencies. Consistently with this, the period was marked by the decay of older European cultural structures.

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Also in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were lively literary exchange relations, in the fields both of higher and of popular literature. At the beginning of the century, translations even dominated the expansive German book market. These included in particular translations of the novels of Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) (→ Media Link #bb) during the phase of "Scottomania", the works of Charles Dickens (1812–1870) (→ Media Link #bc) and William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) (→ Media Link #bd), or those of the French novelists Eugène Sue (1804–1857) (→ Media Link #be) and Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870) (→ Media Link #bf). The statistics of the burgeoning lending library system also supply clear information in this direction.<sup>17</sup> The technology of book production entered the industrial phase through a variety of inventions (paper machines, the high-speed printing machine, type-setting machines, steam binding). Before this, from as early as 1820, in Stuttgart, Leipzig, Vienna, Pest and other places highly productive "translation factories" had been set up, which well fitted this description.<sup>18</sup> On the commercialised translation market, there appeared, in addition to the numbers of novels, a large quantity of anthologies and series (e.g. *Das belletristische Ausland*, 3,618 vols., 1843–1865).<sup>19</sup> The upsurge of translations was promoted by the lack of international agreements on copyright. Foreign authors and publishers had neither to be asked for permission nor paid royalties or licence fees for preparing translations. This situation changed only from the 1860s, after the conclusion of several international agreements, in particular the *Berne Agreement for the Protection of Works of Literature and Art*<sup>20</sup> of 1886. Through such measures the international literary trade gained an increasing degree of legal security, but lost considerably in volume and economic importance at the same time. After a peak between 1845 and 1850 (48 to 50 percent),<sup>21</sup> the share of novel translations in the overall production of fiction in Germany declined rapidly.<sup>22</sup>

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In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a different field was in the centre of attention: German scholarship, which attained world-wide significance especially in the natural sciences, medicine and biology, but also in engineering.<sup>23</sup> German was now one of the chief languages of science, and at the turn of the century was close to becoming *the* main language of research worldwide. Within the German Empire itself, the universities and state research institutions expanded greatly. Connected with this was the setting up of numerous institutes, seminars and laboratories. This, together with the dramatic increase in the numbers of students, had created an enormous demand for scientific literature, both monographs and journals. The mighty upsurge of scientific publishing and bookselling was, however, also supported by a remarkably high demand from abroad, particularly the USA and Japan, but also from many other countries. As well as the publishers, the trade in books for export and in antiquarian scientific literature profited from this.<sup>24</sup> The same period saw the birth and growth of the German foreign book trade: a number of retail firms run by German booksellers came into being in all of the continents, particularly in countries with a high number of German immigrants ("Auslandsdeutschtum"), and became bases of a distribution network through which German books not only reached London, Paris, Rome, Barcelona, St. Petersburg or New York, but were also distributed in South Africa or South America.

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## Discontinuity: The European book market in the period of the World Wars

The lively foreign trade relations were to a considerable extent responsible for the fact that the German book trade in 1913 had attained a level of development that was to remain unsurpassed for many decades, and has in a number of respects until the present. The First World War meant a profound break for the book market as a whole, and in particular for the system of export and the foreign book trade. "[Er] untergrub die moralische Legitimation des Deutschen als internationaler Wissenschaftssprache und leitete, wie sich zeigen sollte, mit unumkehrbarer Wirkung ihren Bedeutungsverlust zunächst im naturwissenschaftlichen und medizinischen Publikationswesen ein".<sup>25</sup> The cessation of postal connections with enemy countries, together with the British trade embargo, limited bookselling traffic to the neighbouring allied or neutral countries. In Germany partial prohibitions of exporting were imposed, until in April 1917 the monitoring of all printed matter for export was ordered.<sup>26</sup> The foreign book trade suffered serious losses from the closing of German firms in the hostile countries, followed not infrequently by the expropriation and expulsion of their owners. Numerous foreign dependencies of German enterprises had to be given up, because stocking German books had ceased to be possible. The confiscation of German property affected not only bookshops as such but also their stocks, which, as goods on commission, were still the property of the suppliers, the publishers. In the USA, following the sinking of the passenger liner "Lusitania" by a German submarine on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1915, there was an outbreak of anti-German hysteria. In some places, German books were removed from libraries or even publicly burnt. From then on, the German language was positively proscribed. With the entry of the USA into the war on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1917, this important market for regular book supplies definitively collapsed: the official import restrictions reduced the potential sales of German books to scientific works and journals regarded by the authorities and by libraries as of military importance and indispensable.

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The collapse of the German book export trade offered the victorious powers, above all France, the opportunity to increase their own cultural influence. The more urgent seemed the efforts to set up the destroyed sales channels of German books abroad as quickly as possible. This, however, was only partially successful. German scientific literature was still sought after, and precisely in the period of inflation, any sales abroad and the foreign currency thereby gained ensured the survival of the firms which were thus able to pick up their earlier international links. However, it was not possible to reestablish the former flourishing of this area. Hyperinflation having been well coped with,<sup>27</sup> the world economic crisis of 1929 was followed by a severe slump. Within Germany, the shrinkage of purchasing power caused a massive weakness of the market.<sup>28</sup> From abroad, too, there was a flood of cancellations of subscriptions to scientific journals or of orders in instalments.

▲ 30

After Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the Nazi regime attempted to counter the continuing loss of importance of German books abroad by generous support of exports, but at the same time undermined foreign interest in German culture and science through its policy of ideological *gleichschaltung*. Among the forms in which this manifested itself was the establishing of a "Deutsche Mathematik" ("German mathematics"). The so-called "Entjudung" ("dejudification") of cultural and scientific life in Germany proved to be a serious and irreversible measure. The expulsion of thousands of writers and scientists (→ Media Link #bh), including many of the most able, led to a flight of the intelligentsia, which also seriously affected publishing and the book trade. Conversely, this was a great gain for the countries of destination of the emigrants, especially the USA and Great Britain. Numerous publishers and booksellers were expelled from Germany, and a number of them were most successful in establishing themselves anew in the receiving countries. Of this there are examples both in literary and popular *belles lettres* and in the scientific publishing field.<sup>29</sup> With the activities of the publishing and bookselling emigrants, not least those who used their knowledge of the European market as well as the markets abroad to make a career as literary agents, new networks came into being. After the war ended, these were to play an important part in the internationalisation of the book trade and the rise of transnationally acting enterprises.

▲ 31

Meanwhile, the Second World War drove still deeper rifts through Europe. Whereas reading the works of foreign authors was not much restricted in Nazi Germany up to 1939, after the war began such books became the "Feindstaatenliteratur" ("literature of hostile states"). Among the features of that epoch that are difficult to grasp is the fact that, despite many prohibitions and much interference, the German book market experienced a marked boom even during the first war years that was not only due to large commissions for the armed forces.<sup>30</sup> All the more profound was the plunge into the phase of "total war", which was accompanied by the closure of firms that almost amounted to a complete cessation of publishing production.



## The book market in the period of European integration and globalisation

Looking back, it is more than surprising that the reconstruction of the international book market structures took place successfully amid the ruins of the old Europe, particularly Germany. The Frankfurt Book Fair, (→ Media Link #bi) which was re-instituted in 1949, developed within only a few years from modest beginnings into a centre of attraction for both foreign and domestic publishers. As early as 1953, there were more foreigners than Germans among the 969 exhibitors registered. In 1973, there were 887 German exhibitors over against 2,930 from abroad.<sup>31</sup> It is remarkable that a platform of information exchange on the world of books accepted by the international community of nations was to develop so soon after the end of the Nazi era and the World War. And the success of the organisation was lasting: the Frankfurt Book Fair has maintained its place as the world's greatest book exhibition, and – still more important – as the central scene of the international trade in book licences. Elsewhere, in Zurich, New York, and world-wide, the literary agencies also perform a function in mediation between the literary cultures that can hardly be over-estimated, not only in the bestseller segment. It is mainly due to their "networking" between authors and publishers that the success of many books attains an international dimension, the transatlantic business being most prominent here.<sup>32</sup>

▲ 33

A European book market in the narrower sense has so far not developed from the activities of these mediating agencies. Of course, transnational media corporations such as Bertelsmann AG unite publishers and book clubs in a large number of countries under their entrepreneurial umbrella and function as factors of a progressive transnational interlinking of the book trade.<sup>33</sup> But the development tends towards globalisation rather than Europeanisation. Close economic relations are to be found between the national book markets of Europe only where there is a common language area (Germany/Austria/Switzerland; France/Belgium; Great Britain/Ireland). Nor has the European Union (EU), whose policy from the start was aimed at a standardisation of the economic area, made much progress in the integration of the national book markets – should this indeed be desirable.<sup>34</sup> In the course of this policy, the national book markets have repeatedly been under pressure from strivings for harmonisation. However, the frame conditions in terms of market policy have remained highly varied until today. This becomes clear, for instance, in the field of value-added tax: in most European countries books, together with certain other products and services considered "basic necessities", have enjoyed a special status, paying only a reduced VAT rate. Five countries, including Great Britain, have even decided on a "zero rate". These variations in the tax rate, however, hardly threaten the ideal of a unified economic area since, because of the number of different language areas, the international trade in books within the Union is perforce able only to achieve a limited economic significance.<sup>35</sup>

▲ 34

We find a similarly uneven picture regarding fixed prices for books. These are seen by their opponents, economic liberals, as an impermissible intervention in the market. Their supporters, however, see them as indispensable for reasons of cultural policy. Among the 27 member countries of the EU, 15 have no price controls, seven have a system based on general law, and six have one under private law. Furthermore, the individual price control concepts, whether rooted in general or private law, differ considerably in their stipulations.<sup>36</sup> The attitude of the European Commission to this set of problems has undergone a change. For a long time, within the framework of an anti-trust policy seen as consumer-friendly, any form of book price control was called in question,<sup>37</sup> as not being compatible with European laws of competition. Since the turn of the millennium, however, views prevail according to which each member state should be free to opt for the retention or introduction of fixed prices for books.<sup>38</sup> Since then, intervention based on European law in this matter has been abstained from invoking Article 151 of the European Community Treaty (resolution of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001),<sup>39</sup> according to which cultural policy is the responsibility and within the competence of the individual states. From a point of view of economic policy, the European Commission continues to forbid price control regulations having trans-border effects, but regards this prohibition as a contribution to safeguarding the national price control systems.

▲ 35

The EU continues to be an instance of control in the case of major fusions of publishing firms. Here viewpoints of antitrust law are consistently pursued. The Commission intervened, for instance, in 2004 in France, where there was already a high degree of concentration in the publishing sector, when further mergers – the acquisition of Vivendi Universal Publishing/Editis by the Lagardère Group/Hachette – were authorised only on certain strict conditions. There are

also approaches to a common "policy for the book" supported by the European Union to be found in the field of copyright (EU Directive on Copyright in the Information Society) or the digitalisation of library, archive or museum holdings (*Europeana*).<sup>40</sup>

▲ 36

The digital network media do not stop at national frontiers. The internet has caused identical problems and the same need for action in all member countries and for all copyright owners. In other fields, there is only to a limited extent such a supranational identity of interests.

▲ 37

Even if the European Union sees cultural policy as essentially the affair of individual states, one can define areas for the application of a European book policy that do not offend against the principle of subsidiarity. At least, this is postulated by a memorandum, *Europe and the book*, drawn up in 2008 by the Federation of European Publishers (FEP/FEE),<sup>41</sup> which contains 20 proposals designed for the promotion of the book in Europe. In view of a volume of 40 thousand million euros, this is the largest field in cultural business. Books are seen as "obviously the fundamental vehicle of European culture, knowledge and languages".<sup>42</sup> One of the packages of measures is directed towards an increased support of the translation business within the EU. It includes promoting the training and further training of translators and publishers in the field of foreign languages. This is intended to strengthen mutual understanding within the EU, and to further the discovery of the common cultural heritage.

▲ 38

The tendency to read literature in translation varies markedly among the various European countries. According to a survey of bestseller lists carried out by a Swedish trade magazine in 2004–2005, the share of native authors among the top ten is lowest in Austria (19 percent) and Germany (24 percent). It is highest in Finland (80 percent). Native authors are preferred in Sweden (61 percent), France and Spain (60 percent each). In Great Britain, 61 percent British and 39 percent American authors are read. In Norway and the Netherlands, native authors account for 44 percent and 41 percent respectively (with c. 35 percent English or American).<sup>43</sup> These data relate only to the most widely read, most popular kinds of literature, and are thus of limited validity. All the same, there seem to be few countries that are open to the whole spectrum of European literature.

▲ 39

Even in Germany, where comparatively much foreign literature is read, the translation statistic on the production of German publishers of the year 2008 indicates a most one-sided concentration. In relation to all first-time publications of that year in Germany, the quota of translations was 8.8 percent. These amounted to 7,340 titles, of which 3,623 were *belles lettres* (fiction, poetry, etc.). Among these, 66.9 percent of translations were from English, followed in second and third place by the original languages French (11.5 percent) and Italian (2.9 percent).<sup>44</sup> The increase of c. ten percent in books translated from English, from 56.8 percent in 2004, shows quite clearly the progressive predominance of English. Even if there are cases in which works from the "smaller national literatures" travel in English translation, before being discovered for other national book markets, the tendency is in the direction of a marginalisation of these literatures originating in narrowly limited language areas. Meanwhile the translation quota, despite all existing national and bilateral promotion programmes, is even much lower in many other countries. At any rate German publishers were able to grant 5,548 foreign licences within Europe in 2008, most of these to Poland (780), the Czech Republic (558), Italy (458) and Russia (452). By way of comparison, British publishers acquired only 105 licences in Germany, which is fewer than Bulgaria (127) and barely more than Lithuania (100).<sup>45</sup>

▲ 40

It is doubtless an ambitious aim to preserve cultural variety in Europe and at the same time to dismantle language barriers. The idea of an intensified interlinking of the national book markets can only be directed towards increasing understanding for neighbouring cultures, but not towards uniformity in the supply of literature available. The medium of the book, even in the digital age, offers the best conditions for this differentiated form of cultural transfer, which also strengthens the position of language minorities.

▲ 41

## Appendix

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Notes

1. ^ cf. Widmann, Herstellung und Vertrieb 1967, col. 546–640.
2. ^ cf. Widmann, Geschichte des Buchhandels 1975, p. 14.
3. ^ cf. *ibid.*, p. 30: "There was no book trade having the extent of that of the Hellenistic or the Roman Imperial age."
4. ^ cf. Rouse / Rouse, Manuscripts and their Makers 2000.
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8. ^ cf. Füssel, Gutenberg und seine Wirkung 1999, esp. p. 48ff.
9. ^ For the following, cf. Kapp, Geschichte des Deutschen Buchhandels 1886, esp. pp. 263–359; also Loewenstein, Der deutsche Sortimentsbuchhandel 1921.
10. ^ cf. Köttelwesch, Die Frankfurter Buchmesse 1973, pp. 1642–1650; Dietz, Zur Geschichte 1921; Toeller, Die Buchmesse 1983; Niemeier, Funktion 2001, esp. pp. 9–26.
11. ^ cf. Finger, Die "Große Kompagnie" 1995, pp. 294–310.
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13. ^ cf. Hellinga, The Bookshop of the world 2001; also: van Delft, Bibliopolis 2003.
14. ^ cf. Willenberg, Distribution und Übersetzung 2008, p. 101. Cf also Fabian, Die erste englische Buchhandlung 1994, esp. p. 216.
15. ^ On the media landscape in the 18th century, cf. Fischer, Von Almanach bis Zeitung 1999.
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20. ^ Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, online: [http://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/ip/berne/trtdocs\\_wo001.html](http://www.wipo.int/treaties/en/ip/berne/trtdocs_wo001.html) [07/12/2009].
21. ^ Of 261 translations of novels in 1845, 105 were from English, 113 from French and 43 from other languages (Bachleitner: "Übersetzungsfabriken", p. XX).
22. ^ For data on the general development of the book market in the 19th and early 20th centuries, cf. Rarisch, Industrialisierung 1976; Kastner, Statistik 2003.
23. ^ cf. Jäger, Der wissenschaftliche Verlag 2001.
24. ^ cf. Zickfeldt, Die Bedeutung des Bücherexports für Deutschland 1922.
25. ^ Jäger, Der wissenschaftliche Verlag 2001, p. 427: "[It] undermined the moral legitimation of German as an international language of science and began, as was to become apparent, its loss of importance with irreversible effect first of all in the natural scientific and medical publishing field". [Übersetzung C. Boone].
26. ^ cf. Weber, Die Bestimmungen 1982.
27. ^ cf. Fischer, Marktorganisation 2007.
28. ^ For data on the development of the book market in the first third of the 20th century, cf. Umlauff, Beiträge zur Statistik 1934; Kastner, Statistik und Topographie 2007.
29. ^ cf. Fischer, Die deutschsprachige Verlegeremigration 2002.
30. ^ cf. Friedländer et al., Bertelsmann im Dritten Reich 2002.
31. ^ cf. Fischer, Rückkehr nach Deutschland 1999, p. 27.
32. ^ cf. Fischer, Literarische Agenturen 2001.
33. ^ Around 120 publishers are grouped by Bertelsmann in the Random House Publishing Group, which operates world-wide; the Direct Group operates book clubs in France and Spain, amongst other countries, and in South America. Further examples of worldwide or Europe-wide activities are Lagardère Publishing (with the third largest publishing group worldwide), Holtzbrinck / MacMillan, Bonnier (Sweden, Germany), the RCS Media Group/Flammarion (Italy, France), and Grupo Planeta/Editis (Spain, France).
34. ^ cf. on the following Fischer, Buchpolitik in europäischer Perspektive 2008.
35. ^ "Note that there is no real risk of a 'race to the bottom' type of tax competition with books, because differences in languages and transaction costs limit interstate trade of books to a large extent." (Appelman / Canoy, Horses for Courses 2002, p. 588).
36. ^ The differences relate, among other things, to the duration of the price fixing, the groups of products covered (there are, for instance, widely differing regulations regarding school books), and the granting of end-buyer discounts both to institutions (libraries) and to private purchasers.
37. ^ cf. Stumpp, Die Preisbindung für Verlagserzeugnisse 1999.
38. ^ Ploeg, Beyond the Dogma of the Fixed Book Price Agreement 2003.

39. <sup>^</sup> Consolidated version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, article 167 (4) [former article 151 (4) TEC]: “The Union shall take cultural aspects into account in its action under other provisions of the Treaties, in particular in order to respect and to promote the diversity of its cultures.” Online: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2008:115:0001:01:EN:HTML> [10/11/2010].
40. <sup>^</sup> cf. <http://www.urheberrecht.org/topic/Info-RiLi/> [30/04/2009] and <http://www.europeana.eu> [30/04/2009].
41. <sup>^</sup> Europe and the book 2008.
42. <sup>^</sup> Ibid., p. 4.
43. <sup>^</sup> The survey used the bestseller lists of nine European countries and the USA; cf. Westerlund, Domestic authors 2005, online: <http://www.svb.se/nyheter/domestic-authors-claim-half-bestseller-listings> [25/01/2010].
44. <sup>^</sup> Börsenverein, Buch und Buchhandel in Zahlen 2008, p. 75f. This publication has appeared since 1952 and is the authoritative source of data on the development of the book market in Germany for this period.
45. <sup>^</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

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Translated by: Colin Boone  
Editor: Jürgen Wilke  
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DDC: 002 [Info ] , 070 [Info ] , 338 [Info ] , 381 [Info ]

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## Citation

Fischer, Ernst: The Book Market, in: European History Online (EGO), published by the Institute of European History (IEG), Mainz 2010-12-03. URL: <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/fischere-2010-en> URN: urn:nbn:de:0159-20100921223 [YYYY-MM-DD].

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- Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1400–1468) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/9815820>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118543768>) ADB/NDB  (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118543768.html>)





#### Link #as

- Anton Koberger (c. 1440–1513) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/15561516>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118563890>) ADB/NDB  (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118563890.html>)


#### Link #au

- Johannes Amerbach (1444–1513) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/84748673>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/123073189>) ADB/NDB  (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd123073189.html>)




#### Link #av

- Johann Froben (c. 1460–1527) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/7440203>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118955179>) ADB/NDB  (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118955179.html>)


#### Link #aw

- Johannes Petri (1441–1511) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/57516267>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/123250889>) ADB/NDB  (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd123250889.html>)

#### Link #ax

- Christoph Plantin (c. 1520–1589) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/120696841>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118741004>) ADB/NDB  (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118741004.html>)

#### Link #ay

- Georg Willer (1514-1593) VIAF   (<http://viaf.org/viaf/88649153>) DNB  (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/120839784>)

ADB/NDB [↗](http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd120839784.html) (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd120839784.html>)



- (<http://daten.digital-sammlungen.de/%7Edb/0002/bsb00027366/images/>)  
Georg Willer, Catalogus Novus ... 1599, BSB [↗](#)

#### Link #b0

- William Caxton (1422–1491) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/68979076>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118667572>)  
ADB/NDB [↗](#) (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118667572.html>)

#### Link #b1

- Elsevier publishers VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/88934776>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118530100>) ADB/NDB [↗](#) (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118530100.html>)

#### Link #b8

- Theophilus Georgi (1674–1762) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/46856084>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/100142028>) ADB/NDB [↗](#) (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd100142028.html>)

#### Link #b9



- (<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/resolveuid/1f46e0440590293e84bf062238cf9e77?mediainfo=1&width=900&height=500>)  
Gustav Adolf von Kröner (1836–1911)

#### Link #ba

- Friedrich Christoph Perthes (1772–1843) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/62344889>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118790471>) ADB/NDB [↗](#) (<http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118790471.html>)

#### Link #bb

- Walter Scott (1771–1832) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/95207079>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118612409>)

#### Link #bc

- Charles Dickens (1812–1870) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/88666393>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118525239>)

#### Link #bd

- William Makepeace Thackeray (1811–1863) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/95208604>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118621483>)

#### Link #be

- Eugène Sue (1804–1857) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/66473859>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118619861>)

#### Link #bf

- Alexandre Dumas (1802–1870) VIAF [↗](#) [↗](#) (<http://viaf.org/viaf/51688902>) DNB [↗](#) (<http://d-nb.info/gnd/118528068>)

#### Link #bh

- Emigration (1933–1945/1950) (<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/de/threads/europa-unterwegs/politische-migration/clus-dieter-krohn-emigration-1933-1945-1950>)

#### Link #bi





- (<http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en/threads/backgrounds/resolveid/3576ff9e3efc69a9fe54d12faaaa2544?mediainfo=1&width=900&height=500>)  
Frankfurt Book Fair 2009